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President Shelly Orders Flags at Half-staff to Honor Former Council Delegate

WINDOW ROCK, ARIZ. – Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly has ordered Navajo Nation flags be flown at half-mast from Nov. 28 through Dec. 1 in honor of former Council Delegate Charlie C. Billy of Chilchinbeto, Ariz., who died Thursday.

Mr. Billy, 74, passed away Thursday evening in Chilchinbeto. He served as a Council Delegate for the communities of Chilchinbeto and Kayenta for 28 years, a career that spanned from Chairman Peter MacDonald to President Kelsey Begaye. He started his seven term career in 1974 and completed his last term in 2002.

"Myself, Vice President Jim and Mrs. Shelly extend our heartfelt condolences to the family of Charlie C. Billy. We lost a great leader who served his community for nearly 30 years on the Navajo Nation Council," said President Shelly.

Mr. Billy was born Dec. 14, 1936 in Chilchinbeto. He eventually would attend Albuquerque Indian School where he graduated in the early 1950s. He then enrolled at Nazarene Indian Bible College in Albuquerque, where he earned his Bachelor's degree. He then became the pastor at the Nazarene Church in Chilchinbeto.

In 1983, the Nazarene Church in Chilchinbeto was burned to the ground, but Mr. Billy showed perseverance and built another church in 1985. He recently retired from being pastor of the church.

As a Council Delegate, he is credited with helping build life enhancing infrastructure in Chilchinbeto. During his tenure as a Council Delegate, he helped the community build a paved road, water lines and electric lines.

Also while he was a delegate, he was one of the instrumental hands in finding funding for Navajo weavers to weave the world's largest Navajo rug.

"Mr. Billy's represented his communities well and always tried to make the communities he represented better. His services will always be remembered. He will be missed by many," President Shelly said.

Mr. Billy is survived by his children, Nancy Badonie of Kayenta, Linda Brown of Crystal, N.M., Chester Billy of Kayenta, Daniel Billy of Kayenta, and Elizabeth Harris of Kayenta; 16 grandchildren; and 25 great-grandchildren.

Mr. Billy's services are scheduled for 10 a.m. Tuesday morning at the Nazarene Church in Chilchinbeto. For more information or to contribute donations to the family, call Daniel Billy at (928) 380-0225.

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